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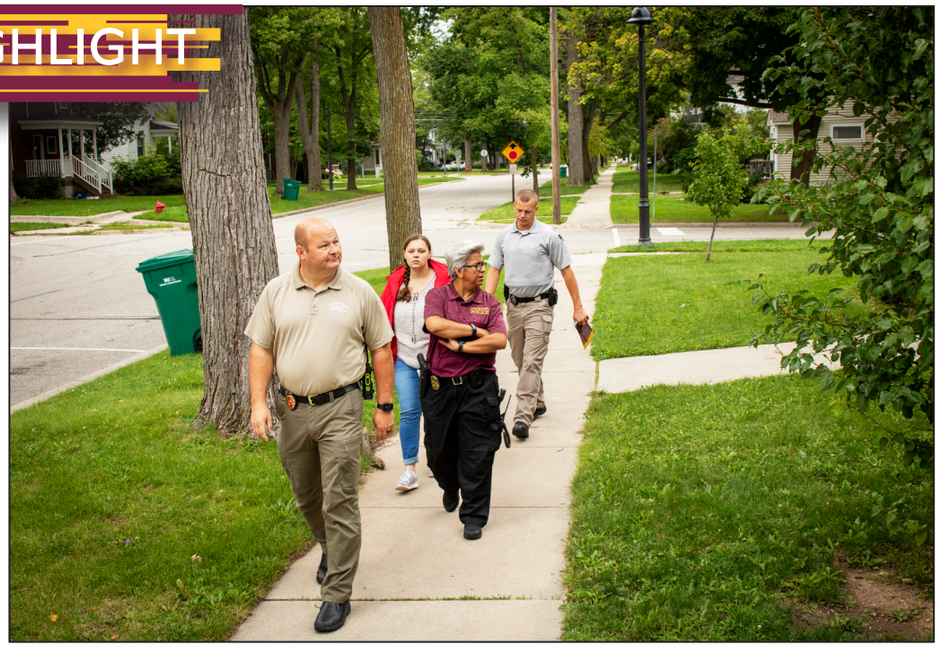

Jenna Spanola | Staff photographer

Officer Josh Theisen and his group walk toward a resident's house in Mount Pleasant on Aug. 23, 2023. Local officers, firefighters, Central Michigan University police and other campus representatives use 'Knock and Talk' to connect with students in off-campus housing, offering advice and informing students of expectations of being a Mount Pleasant resident.

ON THE COVER: Photo Illustration | Caroline Sharbaugh | Presentation Editor | photo assests from pixabay

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Student debt forgiveness: What do I need to know?

Nico Mendoza | Visuals Editor

By Lauren Rice
Masha Smahliuk
News Editors

There are 43 million borrowers burdened with student loans in the United States. They are your neighbors, children, doctors and teachers.

Jerome VanOrman has been a Mount Pleasant High School social studies teacher for 14 years. He has always had a passion for history and supporting kids, which he inherited from his father.

VanOrman graduated with a bachelor's degree in business from Albion College, where he had an athelete scholarship, and a bachelor's degree in education from Central Michigan University. To be able to afford the college tuition, VanOrman decided to take out a student loan. From both degrees, he owed $60,000.

He has been paying his student debt for 20 years, and still has a couple payments to go.

From VanOrman's experience, the problem of student loans is the high interest rate, which for him was 25%, and a confusing language when handling student loans.

"Number one, how can we make univeristy more affordable?" VanOrman said. "Number two, how can we make for those who can't afford to go ... the loan system for them easier to pay back once they graduate?"

Across the nation and right here in the heart of Michigan, politicians, policy experts and academic advocates alike are trying to find a way to make college more affordable.

What is student debt forgiveness?

The Student Debt Forgiveness plan offered by the Biden administration was a way to take the edge off student loans for borrowers. In it, the Biden administration announced forgiveness of up to $20,000 in student loans.

However, on June 30, the Supreme Court ruled against the administration, explaining that the administration was overstepping the congressional authority.

"We hold today that the Act allows the Secretary to 'waive or modify' existing statutory or regulatory provisions applicable to financial assistance programs under the Education Act, not to rewrite that statute from the ground up," the majority opinion stated.

"Republican officials just couldn't bear the thought of providing relief for working-class and middle-class Americans," President Joseph Biden said in a statement. "Republican state officials sued my administration, attempting to block relief, including for millions of their own constituents."

As the Biden administration is searching for a way around the Supreme Court's June ruling, its subsequent attempt is already being opposed.

A release from the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, based in Midland, announced their participation in a complaint filed by the Washington, D.C., think tank New Civil Liberties Alliance (NCLA) against further action by the Department of Education.

"Moving on an accelerated schedule to deter court review, the department of education announced its unlawful new scheme before the ink was dry on the supreme court opinion striking down its old $430 billion student loan debt cancellation plan," a press release read.

Mackinac Center Director of Public Relations Holly Wetzel said they are fighting Biden's plan because they did not take official action by going through Congress.

"There has been no executive order taken for this next phase of loan forgiveness," she said. "The only thing that's happened so far is a press release has been issued. ... It's a clear violation of the separation of powers. And if the administration wants to continue its debt forgiveness plans, then it has to go through Congress in order to do so."

If the plan had gone through Congress, the Mackinac Center wouldn't have fought it, yet they wouldn't have supported it either, because they don't belive that transfering student debt to taxpayers is a solution, Wetzel said.

For now, the plaintiffs are asking for a preliminary injunction to stop Biden's plan from going into effect, she said.

If Biden's proposal had passed, borrowers with federal student loans would have been forgiven between $10,000 and $20,000 per person, Kyla Stepp, a CMU political science professor and College Democrats advisor, said.

That would help a third of borrowers get rid of their student loans entirely, she said.

"It would free up their money to be spent in our economy ... to buy houses and cars and goods," Stepp said.

Courtesy photo of Kyla Step

Therefore, the plan would have benefited "millions of people who are drowing in student loan debt," she said.

Who benefits from student debt forgiveness?

President of College Republicans at CMU Evan Gibeau said that a student debt forgiveness program can look "very appealing" to college students, who are not "familiar with financial cost and burden on our government."

"The way I view it is, it's an attempt to garner more of the college vote," Gibeau said. "In actuality, I think student debt forgiveness does not actually benefit the group of people that the majority of people think it would."

In a May 10 statement U.S. Representative John Moolenaar called the original Biden plan "unconstitutional" and said that the student debt forgiveness plan would benefit the top 60% of earners.

However, according to President Biden's Fact Sheet, 90% of debt cancellation will benefit borrowers earning less than $75,000.

"Today's announcement by President Biden takes money from hardworking Michigan families and benefits mostly wealthier Americans who chose to take on debt on their own," Moolenaar said in a statement.

Central Michigan Life made several attempts to interview Moolenaar. He refused to comment.

President Biden in his statement on June 30, said the student debt forgiveness plan will specifically benefit people in the middle class.

"But I know who student loan borrowers are in this country and so do all of you: the couple putting off having a child until they can find their way to deal with their debt," he said.

Cathy Willermet, chair of Isabella County Democrats said the student debt forgiveness is "an investment into students."

She recalled when she went to college in 1986, the tuition was "much more affordable." Students were required to pay 15% to 20%, and everything else covered by the state. Since President Ronald Reagan's administration, she said, the situation flipped.

Mount Pleasant High School's VanOrman said in the '90s, everything from the cost of tuition to housing rentals was more affordable.

"You have a very different situation where ... our economy is still built and growing on people having college degrees," Willermet said.

"Since 1980, the total cost of both four-year public and four-year private college has nearly tripled, even after accounting for inflation," President Biden's Fact Sheet read.

Now, students come out of college with thousands of dollars in debt on top of, for example, covering a mortgage. That creates "a very difficult situation for students," Willermet said.

However, easing the situation with student debt can help the students start contributing back to the community.

"We want an educated populace," Willermet said. "Your education benefits me. Because you are an educated person, you are then going to make decisions; you're going to help; you're going to start (a) business; you're going to do things that are going to benefit me.

"That's my value to why I want my tax dollars to support you for college ... the same reason why we support K-12 public schools. ... We want everyone to be generally educated."

The Michigan budget for the fiscal year 2024 funds a variety of programs at the pre-k through 12th-grade levels.

- **Pre-K for all**
- **K-12 funding**
- **Tutoring & literacy**
- **Student wellness**
- **Educators**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Fiscal responsibility**

According to a press release from Governor Gretchen Whitmer's office, the budget includes record investments to support students and promote opportunities.

Student debt forgiveness "can help people ... on a monthly basis to be able to pay their bills and to be able to contribute more to the economy, which I think, is a good thing," Stepp said.

However, VanOrman said there is no guarantee of what the borrowers' financial decision would be after having their loans forgiven. We are in an era that requires college education, but not every person requires a four-year university degree. Whether a two-year associate's degree, a trade school or just going straight from high school into the work force, the decision should be normalized, VanOrman said.

"We have seen an influx of people in this country going to college for, potentially, degrees that they don't even need," Wetzel from the Mackinac Center said.

Instead, Wetzel said that high schools, trade schools and community colleges are alternatives to getting a job without a college degree, because a degree does not promise you a job.

Is debt forgiveness fair?

Meanwhile, Gibeau said that paying out students' debt now would be unfair toward those who have already paid off their debt themselves or those who decided not to go to college.

"I would be extremely unhappy if other people got the chance to have their debt relieved on my own dime," Gibeau said. "I think it's fundamentally unfair to pull the rug from people who've already paid their dues.

"I think it's also unfair to ... people who can't afford college (to have) ... now (their) taxes ... paying into other people's college debt relief."

That's why, even though he would like to have his debt relieved himself, Gibeau said he doesn't believe it is the right thing to do.

VanOrman said the student loan debt is one's financial responsibily, and it is unfair that other people would pay borrowers' debt.

"My thing is, as an individual, if I borrow something from you ... I expect I'm going to pay you back," VanOrman said. "That's my personal responsibility."

Willermet said she paid her debt of $70,000. Now she wants to help others pay off their debts, as well.

"I paid mine, but why would I want other people to suffer?" Willermet said. "I want to make sure my kids go to college. I want to make sure those people's kids go to college."

You don't have to be affected by a certain situation to be willing to care about it, she said. She believes that people are "fundamentally kind" and wants to help and understand other people's situations.

"I'm a fan of giving people a better chance to do well in life," CMU Prof. Stepp said.

Will it be a financial burden on the government?

Stepp explained that the student debt will be paid out of the federal government budget, which wouldn't be a direct bill to taxpayers.

"Some think it wouldn't make that big of a difference because the economy would, increase because people with student loans could finally start buying houses and cars and do more with their money," Stepp said. "Others disagree, (saying) it would be a big impact."

With the expiration of pandemic legislation intended to lighten the load for borrowers, there may be more damaging economic impacts coming this year.

"The pause in student loan payments ends in Oct., and that alone could be enough to put us into recession," Stepp said.

She added that student loan debt is probably something Congress will have to address, "but with the republican-controlled house, that's unlikely to happen for a while."

Courtesy photo from Evan Gibeau.

"The issue keeps coming up, and as something that cripples an entire generation financially, there's certainly an economic impact there," Stepp said.

VanOrman said that the inflation could increase and taxes could go up.

"If you eliminate $1.8 trillion, it's got to come from somewhere," he said. "(Governments) tax, that's how they make the revenue stream."

Gibeau believes that student debt forgiveness would put a burden on taxpayers, since the taxes would increase.

"Our economy really isn't in a great spot to be raising the debt ceiling even further ... because we're looking at an impending financial crisis," Gibeau said. "I just don't think that our federal government, with the spending that they already do, has money in the budget that could realistically be put towards student loan forgiveness."

Gibeau called the student debt forgiveness "insanely expensive" and encouraged people to look into where this money comes from and goes.

Meanwhile, Willermet pointed out that if the taxpayers who are in the "1% of earners," which according to Forbes, means residents with an annual salary of at least $597,815 , paid their

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DEBT |

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at least $597,815 , paid their fair share, the government would have been able to make up money forgiven in student loans.

"(Billionaires) want an educated workforce, right?" Willermet said. "You can put money into the system that ultimately is benefiting the business owner because you have an educated workforce. ... It's not like those billionaires and multimillionaires are bad people ... it's about really trying to make it pay into the system ... (that they are) benefiting from."

What comes next?

As an alternative to student debt forgiveness, Gibeau offered an idea to reduce the cost of college tuition without increasing federal spending.

"In a perfect world, education would become cheaper," he said.

This year CMU increased tuition rates, housing, food and parking permit prices, according to an email CMU One Central sent to students on June 29.

VanOrman also advocated for an affordable college, as well as making a student loan system and interest rate feasible instead of "chaining people to this huge bill of loan debt."

Additionally, he said providing job placements and "pumping up" some of the degree programs could help people pay off their debt.

"I don't believe in forgiving the loans totally," VanOrman said. "I believe in taking the interest rate way down."

Mackinac Center for Public Policy Director of Fiscal Policy James Hohman said his organization envisions making college tuition cheaper by state lawmakers using the payments to higher education into incentivize lower tuition.

"The institutions get billions through the state budget and the payments are not based on degree completion, tuition levels or even the number of students who attend," Hohman said. "Payments are based on what the schools got last year, and what they got in the past is based on nothing but politics.

"Legislators can accomplish a lot more with the money that they already give the schools each year, and putting together an outcome-based funding formula would be a better use of lawmaker interest and taxpayer money than further coverage of college costs by taxpayers."

> "One thing that I learned from my years of being an activist is that ... there is power in your voice."
>
> **Cathy Willermet**
>
> **Isabella County Democrats chair**

In executive directive 2023-3, dated May 24, Whitmer signed to lower the cost of education and make student loans more accessible.

"Loans are an important component of expanding access to postsecondary education, but we must create an environment where those loans do not burden people beyond their means or drag families into a debt cycle," the press release said.

- Thus, the Department of Treasury is now directed to study how to permit Michiganders to access lower interest rates and refinance their current state loans.
- The Department of Insurance and Financial Services is directed to study loan affordability and transparency.
- The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Office of the State Employer and the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity are directed to consider how Michigan can relief the student loan burden on Michiganders.
- Educational materials for borrowers must be assessed by the Department of Treasury and Michigan Department of Education.

Whitmer's executive order also tasked state departments with a cost-benefit analysis of having the state re-enter the market as a student loan originator.

How far does that go?

Moreover, Whitmer established the bipartisan Michigan Reconnect program to start a tuition-free education for over 100,000 Michiganders.

She also announced Michigan Achievement Scholarship to lower the college cost. With the scholarship, Michigan high school graduates enrolled in a Michigan univeristy or community college will be able to receive up $5,500 per year up to five years in the financial aid from State of Michigan.

Now that the Supreme Court struck down Biden's plan, the Congress will decide what happens next, Stepp explained.

To voice your opinion on the student debt forgiveness plan, Willermet advised to write your senators, call their Washington office and let them know what you support.

"One thing that I learned from my years of being an activist is that ... there is power in your voice," she said.

BY THE NUMBERS

The following are the cost increases the CMU Board of Governors approved in June:

- Tuition has increased by $18 per credit hour for lower-level classes and $24 per hour for upper-level classes.
- Standard four-person and two-person suites rates have increased by $250 per semester; premium two-person suites have increased by $288; and premium four-person suites have increased by $325.
- The Central 12 meal plan has increased by $183 per semester; Central 16 meal plan has increased by $214 per semester; and the All-Access plan has increased by $215 per semester.
- Parking permits have increased by $15.

What's one thing you wish you knew before coming to CMU?

"There are more dining hall options than what is in your dorm hall"

Luke Mesner
Real Estate
Freshman
Plymouth

"How accessible the study spaces are. I didn't realize there were so many because at Michigan State University they are usually all taken"

Sydney Pauls
Medicine
Graduate Student
West Bloomfield

"How hard the classes are. Time management is important"

Ebube Ogbu
Product Design and Engineering Technology
Sophomore
Novi

Photos and content compiled by Ally Meske; asked in late April on the Central Michigan University campus. Design by Caroline Sharbaugh with assets from Canva.

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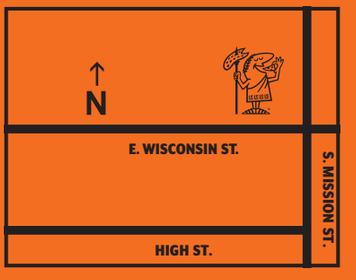

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This way to safety

CMU reveals new security measures for emergencies

By Renae King
Staff Reporter

New safety measures are being placed on Central Michigan University's campus. Earlier this year, CMU students voiced safety concerns following the tragic shooting incident at Michigan State University's campus on Feb. 13.

On Aug. 1, CMU announced the addition of four new access controls to doors on academic buildings. Effective Aug. 7, new electronic access controls have been enabled in Pearce Hall, Anspach Hall, the Dow Science Building and Park Library.

These controls allow the CMU Police Department to remotely secure exterior doors in the event of an emergency on campus.

During the buildings' designated operational hours, the doors will remain open and unlocked, and will be marked with an "enter" sign.

Doors marked with an "exit" sign will always be locked from the outside of the building, though all doors can be used to exit the building.

Academic buildings will remain open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. from Monday through Friday. However, CMU students, staff and faculty will have access to these buildings during extended hours, ranging from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., by using their CentralCard at selected doors with card readers.

Aaron Mills, the director of communications at CMU, said the university plans to install access controls on additional buildings throughout the academic school year as funds become available. These buildings will include the Health Professions Building, Education and Human Services Building, Moore Hall, Wightman Hall, North Art Studio, Music Building and Grawn Hall.

Coming to fruition

On Feb. 13, a mass shooting occurred in two buildings on MSU's campus. The tragedy claimed the lives of three students, and five others were left injured after 43-year-old Anthony Dwayne McRae opened fire in East Lansing.

Following the incident, CM Life asked CMU students about their perceived safety on campus.

In the article, Zainab Naaz, an international student from India, said she was "concerned" about safety in the lecture halls.

Echoing Naaz's concerns, fifth-year student Emily Lang said the general public should not have access to the academic buildings.

"I think it's odd that they are able to do that, and after what happened at MSU, I feel like we need to kind of have the same system in place that we have for the dorms," Lang said in February.

However, according to Mills, the university's efforts to strengthen campus safety predate the February incident at MSU.

"CMU began installing access controls in February 2017," Mills said. "The information we shared with the campus community on Aug. 1 ... is the next step in that process of expanding campus security."

Weighing the options

CMUPD Lt. Mike Sienkiewicz said that while the university can't completely close off access to the public, the new controls will provide an added layer of protection to university buildings.

Nico Mendoza | *Visuals Editor*
A set of doors located on the south side of Anspach Hall, on Monday, August 21, 2023.

Nico Mendoza | *Visuals Editor*
An access control is mounted on a pole in front of Anspach Hall, on Monday, August 21, 2023.

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Central Michigan Life serves the CMU and Mount Pleasant communities, and is under the jurisdiction of the independent Student Media Board of Directors. Regan Foster serves as Director of Student Media at CMU and is the adviser to the newspaper. Articles and opinions do not necessarily reflect the position or opinions of Central Michigan University. Central Michigan Life is a member of the Associated Press, the Michigan Press Association, the Michigan Collegiate Press Association, the Associated Collegiate Press, College Newspaper Business & Advertising Managers Association, the Mount Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce, Central Michigan Home Builders Association, Mount Pleasant Housing Association and the Mount Pleasant Downtown Business Association. The newspaper's online provider is SN Works.

Central Michigan Life is distributed throughout the campus and at numerous locations throughout Mount Pleasant. Non-university subscriptions are $75 per academic year. Back copies are available at 50 cents per copy, or $1 if mailed. Photocopies of stories are 25 cents each. Digital copies of photographs published in Central Michigan Life are available upon request at specified costs.

Central Michigan Life's editorial and business offices are located at 436 Moore Hall, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI 48859, telephone (989) 774-3493 or 774-LIFE.

"Security is really a balancing act," he said. "You're balancing an open, welcoming campus and a need for security, so they kind of conflict with each other. As a public institution, we still have somewhat of a need to have some openness to our facilities."

Apart from access controls, Sienkiewicz said the CMUPD has met with groups of students, staff and faculty to provide additional training on how to navigate emergency situations and ensure their personal safety.

The training was conducted by CMU's Emergency Management, which oversees projects and initiatives related to emergency and disaster preparation, training, mitigation, response and recovery.

According to CMU's website www.cmich.edu/about/emergency-managment, the management team provides safety training to the campus community through "classroom and online training, individual and group training, orientations, consultative sessions, seminars and orientation materials as they relate to major campus emergency incidents."

> "Security is really a balancing act. You're balancing an open, welcoming campus and a need for security, so they kind of conflict with each other. As a public institution, we still have somewhat of a need to have some openness to our facilities."
>
> **Lt. Mike Sienkiewicz**
> CMUPD Officer

Sienkiewicz recommends those on campus to familiarize themselves with CMU's existing safety measures, including the Blue Lights placed around campus and CMU's safety app, Rave Guardian. He said it's also important for people to be aware of their surroundings when navigating campus grounds and to recognize entry and exit points on buildings.

In the event of an active shooter or violent incident on campus, Sienkiewicz said people should adhere to the "Run. Hide. Fight." model, which are three actions one should take when confronted with an active attacker -- run if you can, hide if you can't and fight as a last resort.

Sienkiewicz said he remains confident in the university's ability to ensure campus security and encourages members of the community to join in these efforts.

"I would say CMU and Mount Pleasant in general are still a very safe community," he said. "We encourage people to report suspicious situations or things that don't seem right ... Early reporting and early intervention are really key to helping stop something bad from happening. There's a lot of tools here on campus to help keep people safe."

For more information about safety on campus, visit CMU's website www.cmich.edu/

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- Anspach Hall
- Dow Science Building
- Park Library

Still to be upgraded this academic year:

- Health Professions/CMED
- Education and Human Services
- Moore Hall
- The Music Building
- Wrightman Hall/North Art Studio
- Grawn Hall

- Academic building extended hours/accessibility by CentralCard: 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. for students; 24/7, faculty and staff
- Park Library: Noon to midnight Sunday; 7:30 a.m. to midnight Monday through Thursday; 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday; noon to 8 p.m. Saturday.
- Academic buildings general access: 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday; Saturday and Sunday card access hours

For more information, visit cmich.edu/about/campus-safety/building-access.

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Q&A

Robert Davies

As the campus community has emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, the university and president have been able to focus more on things like recruitment, renovation and reorganizations. *Central Michigan Life* sat down with Davies to ask for his takeaways of the past academic year and how the lessons learned will shape Central Michigan University's future.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Responses are edited for length and clarity.

Do you have plans to stick around for a while?

My goal is to be here as long as possible. My family and I obviously enjoy Mount Pleasant, Michigan, the Central Michigan University family and community. I think that over the past five years, we have overcome a lot of challenges and I think we are seeing an upswing in Central; so like I said I plan on being here for quite some time. It is interesting, you raise an interesting point. The average longevity of a president has decreased over time, but again I think that there's a lot of reasons for that. I do know several presidents that have been serving five years or more. Two of my mentors, one served 25-plus years and the other one served about 15 years.

Not many people have had three presidencies. I think three is a good number.

The tuition rates increased recently. Overall, do you feel like CMU's budgeting process is transparent and fair?

I think it is very transparent and I do think it is fair. What we try to do is ... think about how we bring in revenues and how we spend those revenues, again, to support the students and support the faculty and staff and their mission. As you mentioned we did increase tuition, we would obviously never want to increase tuition, but the cost went up this year due to inflation. Insurance has gone up incredible amounts due to all the different things that are going on, as well as other factors that increases costs.

What we try to do is also make sure that we are fiscally responsible. We continue to add value, and I think those are the important aspects. One of the key things too is, as you compare us to the other public universities in Michigan, we are still among the lowest in terms of tuition costs. We provide excellent value and then also we also have a very robust scholarship program for both merit- and need-based and so we strive very hard to be affordable and to be accessible.

Has CMU held meetings to offer communication between the university and university community to go through what those tuition increases include?

We have extensive meetings in which we talk about the budgeting process. There's a budget priorities committee that discusses the various options throughout the year. The budgeting process itself involves many individuals across the institution, from vice presidents to deans to directors to a lot of other other individuals providing input. It is not done in a vacuum, it's not done in my office by myself and one other person; it involves a lot of individuals providing their collective thought.

Are there any discussions or plans for the land where Kewadin Village was and Northwest Apartments once its demolished?

Right now, where Kewadin Village was, we're keeping that as green space. I know there's a lot of individuals on campus who have ideas of what they want to do with that, but right now we're going to keep that for green space. Down the line there could be options but right now we want the flexibility of just keeping that as green space. Northwest is still Northwest; that will come down soon and again we'll keep that as green space for the time.

Recently, reorganizations specifically within the College of Arts and Media have begun. Does the university plan to have future reorganizations within colleges and what are the university's current thoughts about that?

Well, I think you're referring to Broadcast and Cinematic Arts, Journalism, IPR and Communication merging together, and I think that's reflective of the industry. It's reflective of the new role of journalism, it's the new role of communication and how those specific areas are interdependent and are stronger together in those efforts. To me, I think that is a response to ensuring our academic programs remain excellent and remain relevant and, again, support the mission of the success of our students and the alumni.

Will there be other organizations overtime? Absolutely. The university needs to continually reflect the needs and the opportunities that are in front of the communities, and we need to continue to think about how we best serve those needs and that will always be a discussion of reorganization. That's part of the process. Are there specific plans in place right now? I know the deans are meeting (at) a retreat right now. They may be talking about some but, again, those will be in the very initial phases if they are.

CMU's medical program recently expanded. Do you think this is also indicative of real-world needs and do you foresee the medical program continuing to expand in the future?

Jumping back to the BCA and Journalism and everything else, I will say five years ago when I first started, alumni were talking about that. Alumni themselves were saying this is something that we're in, in the industry, so we are always listening to industry.

With the College of Medicine, 10 years in if I'm not mistaken, it has surpassed many expectations that were put forward. The very first class was 64 people, we now admit 104 individuals. We receive over 8,000 applicants for those 104 slots. There's opportunities for us to really become the premier health communicator, health educator, health provider in Central Michigan all the way up through northern Michigan. You're seeing that through our rural health equity institute where it's about providing information in those areas where there's a dearth of hospitals, there's a dearth of health providers; they communicate with K-12, they communicate with other nonprofits, they communicate with health districts and being that hub of information. It was a hub for people during COVID, (they needed) straight answers and they were in a position to do that.

This time of year is a big milestone for many students who are starting or returning to their college experiences. Central Michigan University President Bob Davies is celebrating a milestone of his own: five years in office. He said he "plans on sticking around" for as long as possible.

Aurora Abraham ■ Past Editor-in-Chief

For more information on this story, visit WWW.CM-LIFE.COM

| OPINION EDITORIAL

The price is right…is it?

As we return to campus, changes from the summer loom over us. Whether it is the memories we have made or lessons we have learned, we all share a common change.

On June 29, Central Michigan University announced a tuition, housing, food and parking permit price increase in an email to its students. That was after a Board of Trustees meeting the same day where the increases were voted on and approved without a public hearing.

Inflation rates have increased since the pandemic, and according to the email, CMU had not aligned its prices last year to adjust to the rates sooner.

For the 2022 to 2023 fiscal year, CMU increased its lower-level undergraduate tuition rates by 3.53%, according to last year's budget.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Consumer Price Index had increased by almost 10% in Michigan that year. In June of 2023, the CPI declined to 4.7%. CMU increased its lower-level undergraduate tuition rates by 4.09% this year, which is still below the CPI inflation rate.

On June 28, the day before the CMU board voted, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer issued a press release about the "Make it in Michigan" budget plan. Within this plan, a 5% ongoing increase was given to advance university and community college operations.

The Michigan budget totals to $81.7 billion. CMU's fiscal budget this year is $434.5 million after receiving $91 million from the state and cutting $272,361 from the general funds, *Central Michigan Life* previously reported.

CMU's 2023-2024 tuition for in-state residents that are incoming freshman stands at $13,740; continuing students is $14,790; and international students totals $24,750. Out of Michigan's 15 public universities, only Northern Michigan University at $13,304 and Saginaw Valley State University at $11,230 beat this price.

CM Life reports on behalf of students to inform and address issues, changes and events that directly impact students. However, we are students as well. These changes impact us all.

One of the topics we felt strongly about was communication.

The only email that was sent to students regarding the tuition increase was received before a holiday. If a student is not taking summer classes, they are less likely to check their student email.

CMU President Bob Davies said when it comes to the budgeting process, there are "extensive meetings" held, including a budget priorities committee discussing various options throughout the year.

"(The budgeting process) is not done in a vacuum, it's not done in my office by myself and one other person; it involves a lot of individuals providing their collective thought," he said.

Although the committee consists of many individuals across campus, students were not included in the conversation.

When asked if the university's budgeting process is transparent and fair, President Davies said yes.

"What we try to do is … think about how we bring in revenues and how we spend those revenues to support the students and support the faculty and staff and their mission," he said.

The student body at CMU consists of students from different backgrounds, with and without privileges. Some of us receive help from scholarships and family to fund our education, whereas others are completely on their own.

Students with scholarships or that work as Residential Assistants are also worried about whether they will no longer have certain funds covered that they previously did. With the tuition rates, meal plans and housing prices increasing, do scholarship awards as well?

According to CMU, this year the university is committing $55.4 million in financial aid, with nearly 80% of all undergraduate students receiving scholarships and grants.

The majority of students

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have a job, whether it is on or off-campus, in order to support themselves. However, there are very limited job opportunities on campus besides work- study.

Even then, work-study jobs do not allow a student to work under the same department as their major and they need to have a Free Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA) approved. That makes it so international students are ineligible for work-study.

International students' visas restricts them from working off-campus during the school year. Additionally, before coming to America they must have an I-20 form filled out with their fixed expenses. Meaning, the tuition increase being announced in the midst of summer does not give international students any leeway to fix their I-20 documentation.

The tuition increase requires students to prioritize expenditures and cut those that aren't necessary. Which is a great learning opportunity, except for when you have to start cutting out student organizations and your social life so you can afford to attend college.

Students' schedules are filled with classes, studying, homework, maintaining a job, being a part of an RSO and somehow fitting in a social life.

On top of balancing life as a student, a federal mandate limits on-campus work hours to 20 hours a week during the school year, and to 40 hours a week for the summer. If students go over their hours, they receive two warnings over email and then are terminated from all of their CMU jobs after the third warning. The university is fined, otherwise.

Furthermore, students are usually working over the 20 hour period, but are just not counting their hours (and not receiving that pay) to avoid getting fired by the university. But still doing the same amount of work as a full-time employee.

To put it into perspective, part-time students are paid $10 an hour for eight pay-periods throughout the 16 weeks within a semester. Without including taxes, students receive about $3,200 in total for the semester they worked on-campus. That does not even cover half of one semester of tuition at CMU, which ranges between $5,496 to $12,375 for both in-state and international students.

No individual could ever live off this pay while accounting for tuition, housing, meal plans and any added funds.

It is frustrating for students to be limited to certain hours when they need money, and then be forced to take on several jobs at a time just to afford an education. It is especially frustrating when we are the ones penalized and told we will be fired from all of our CMU jobs.

CMU offers so many incredible experiences with its academics and on-campus events, but it is hard for students to enjoy those when they are focused more on how they are going to afford getting through the week, let alone the years ahead.

Several students we talked to have said they really hope it is worth it in the end. For right now, it is worth it. But as student loans pile on and the tuition rates increase, it is hard to feel hopeful towards the future.

CMU stated in its email that even with these changes, the university continues to offer below the average of Michigan's 15 public universities. It included how nearly 94% of CMU alumni are employed or entering a service program within six months of graduation.

This feels like a way to justify the tuition increase. This is now becoming the bare minimum of expectations, and if it is not achieved, then it is hard for students to feel it is a beneficial price to pay.

CM Life staff was asked if they could redo their first two years at CMU at a community college instead, would they? Most students said no because of the positive experience we have shared on campus, as well as the appeal of living away from home.

Overall, attending CMU has been incredibly worth it. But as the price tag continues to grow, job searches and doubt in students' hearts follows.

The next board of trustees meeting is Sept. 29. There will be time for public comment.

CM Life encourages students that wish for their voices to be heard to take advantage of the platforms that will allow you to do so — and continuously seek those opportunities or bring them to the table.

We offer a platform for all students, including ourselves. Each of us has found a home at CMU, whether it is in others or in student organizations. Let us not allow a price tag to discourage our love for the university. Let us work together to make it a functioning and welcoming home for everyone.

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OPINION

Chapter 104 of Central Michigan Life

Zipporah Abarca

Editor-in-Chief

Chapter 104 of *Central Michigan Life* has begun. This student newsroom has remained on campus since 1919 with a sole purpose to be the student body's voice. There have been years where this mission has wavered — not allowing every student's voice to be heard, or focusing too much on general university issues rather than the impacts they have on each human demographic we have on campus.

It is with a fulfilled warm heart that I can say last year our Editor-in-Chief Aurora Abraham made sure every individual on campus was seen. From 2022 to 2023, *CM Life's* sole purpose was achieved and recognized. I was one of the news editors on staff, so I was there for every meeting, training session and event that *CM Life* was a part of.

I say this because I was a witness to the passion our staff had (and has) to ensure our mission was more successful than it had ever been. Aurora continued to spark that fire and all while doing so, she made the newsroom such a beautifully welcoming space for every person that walked through our door, whether they were just a friend of a friend, or someone seeking a place to belong. I saw it all. And I was a part of every moment.

As you can tell, I grew incredibly close with our editor-in-chief. She's now in Washington, D.C., and we FaceTime every day talking about our dreams for the future — to one day run a newsroom together again. This dream stems from my personal experience as a reporter, a news editor and now an editor-in-chief

When I first joined *CM Life* as a sophomore, I had just moved to a city two hours away from home and knew absolutely no one. This was my first college experience. My first year was spent hunched over on my bed joining zoom call after zoom call, so the anxiety of throwing myself into a well-known newsroom without having any real experience... I was more than anxious.

My first assignment with *CM Life* was a 200 to 300 word article to preview an event on campus. But this also meant I had to do an interview with a professor that was running the event. I was dreading that interview, pushing it off until I absolutely had to do it before deadline. But then once the conversation was rolling, and it ended in 15 minutes, I felt like I could fly. And then the next assignment came in, and the next. I still ran into those moments, and honestly two years later I feel the butterflies kick in before every interview... but they're different, much different.

Before I let myself drone on, I'll get to the point. I started out as a reporter that didn't have a clue as to what real journalism looked like. My anxiety was at an all time high, whereas my confidence was at rock bottom. I never truly felt like I belonged in the newsroom. A friendship never kindled, and I felt that I was surrounded by real journalists every time I entered the newsroom, whereas I felt less than.

Then, the editor-in-chief at the time, Michael Livingston and my editor Makayla Coffee told me to apply to be a news editor. I had been hesitant to do so, but when I felt seen by these two that I highly respected, it felt like I could fly again.

Once I went into the role of being news editor, I thought, "Who the hell do I think I am?" The doubts began to seep in again, and the anxiety kicked and shoved. But under Aurora's leadership and with a new director, Regan Foster — a total badass who has seen the world through a reporter's lens — I began to feel comfortable with the doubt. This was normal, and everything was going to be okay. And it was.

These women revamped every aspect of the newsroom and I was in awe of them all throughout the year. I had many moments where I thought to myself, "That's who I want to be." In no time, the newsroom became one of the only spots on campus I truly felt at home.

After serving different roles in *CM Life*, witnessing different leadership and completing my summer internship working at The Alpena News, I have come to realize so much about myself and how I see journalism. I return this fall to *CM Life* not only with a tan, but with a heart and mind filled with excitement, vision and love. I have had the honor of meeting so many people that have led me to the mindset I have today.

Some of these individuals such as Aurora and Regan, as you can tell, have had an incredible impact on me as a woman and as a leader — thank you for every bit of guidance and for simply being the flawlessly amazing leaders you are.

To Maya Denslow, the owner of Jib-Bob, who has taught me the importance of being a human before a reporter. I have cherished every bit of our relationship, and you have, more than you know, made me want to be a platform for voices that go unheard or ignored.

To Maryam Blackeagle, the owner of Mashkiki Garden in Hubbard Lake, and Carolina Hernandez-Ruiz, a Central Michigan University student. You have both instilled within me the knowledge of just how much of an impact journalism can make in this world. I cannot thank you both enough for your willingness to share your stories with me. You are some of the most strong, kindhearted women I know.

With all this being said, I came into this position as editor-in-chief with changed confidence, having many supporters throughout the newsroom and my friends, as well as myself, saying this is what I'm meant to do. I believe this 100%. My dream is cultivated from the many experiences I've had, people I've met and the world I have seen.

Journalism today focuses too much on the competitiveness of being the first to tell a story. It focuses too much on simply the conversations and money involved with politics, and not the people impacted by these conversations. Typically, those stories are recycled from other reporting as well. This is prevalent across big named newsrooms in the United States, and this isn't journalism.

I have learned that true journalism is when you do a story justice. This means you have done research before just copying what you've read from other media. This means you have interviewed and sought out the people that are directly impacted by those conversations. This means you have looked at every other angle you could possibly take with that story and creating something that is your own reporting, not a copy.

This knowledge has driven me, and Ms. Aurora Abraham to want to change the world of journalism. We will eventually run an international newsroom that is built upon that exact foundation. *CM Life* has ignited this burning fire within the both of us. You saw it in our reporting last year. We steered away from comfortability. We sought out diversity and inclusivity to tell the whole story and make all students feel truly welcome. We looked for guidance from our readers and CMU staff and faculty to see where we lacked. We worked our asses off to re-instill and amplify what *CM Life* is known for. And as the new editor-in-chief alongside such an incredible and driven staff with a similar outlook, I tell you now — just keep reading.

First Amendment
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Design by Caroline Sharbaugh |Presentation Editior

WEEKS OF WELCOME '23

Program Board Movie:
The Little Mermaid
7:30pm
Kramer/Deromedi Field at Kelly/Shorts Stadium

RecFest
7:00-10:00pm
Student Activity Center (SAC)

MainStage
4:00-7:00pm
Franklin Street

MainStage Block Party
7:30-10:00pm
Finch Fieldhouse Plaza

Central Welcome Breakfast
8:00-11:00am
Bovee UC Rotunda

Student Employment Job Fair
11:00am-2:00pm
Bovee UC Rotunda

LGBTQ+ Welcome Back Celebration
4:00-6:00pm
Center for Student Inclusion and Diversity (UC 108)

Program Board Trivia Tuesday
7:00pm
Bovee UC Auditorium

Get Acquainted Day
4:00-7:00pm
Warriner Mall

First Gen Resource Fair/Mixer
5:00-7:00pm
Bioscience 1010

International Movie:
English Vinglish
7:00pm
Kramer/Deromedi Field at Kelly/Shorts Stadium

Greeks on the Lawn
Interfraternity Council
11:00am-1:00pm
Bovee UC Front Lawn

vGreeks on the Lawn
Collegiate Panhellenic Council
11:00am-1:00pm
Bovee UC Front Lawn

Greeks on the Lawn
National ***Pan-Hellenic Council and Multicultural Greek Council***
11:00am-1:00pm
Bovee UC Front Lawn

CMU Pep Rally/ Kickin it with the VPSA
6:00-8:00pm
Kulhavi Events Center Plaza

Tailgate Central
11:00am-1:00pm
Student Activity Center (Outside)

CMU vs New Hampshire
1:00pm
Kramer/Deromedi Field at Kelly/Shorts Stadium

Coneys and Careers
11:00am-2:00pm
Bovee UC Front Lawn

Start of Hispanic Heritage Month Events
Various Campus Locations

Tailgate Central Watch Party: Notre Dame
2:00pm
Kramer/Deromedi Field at Kelly/Shorts Stadium

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Feature: entertainment

HOLY COMIC BOOKS, BATMAN!

By Carter Salley
Staff film reviewer

Are you a geek looking to express your geeky personality? Have you ever wanted to meet some of your favorite movie stars? Have you ever wished you had never sold those toys you had as a kid? Well look no further than Motor City Comic Con to fill these desires!

Motor City Comic Con is a convention held in Detroit for all fans of pop culture to unite and celebrate their love for all things geeky. If you're nervous for your first time, here are five tips to get you through.

Carter Salley | Staff photographer
Art inspired by favorite movies, books, T.V. shows and more — such as this gallery by artist Tony Santiago — is a common site at Motor City Comic Con.

5. THE ARTIST ALLEY

At Comic Con, you can purchase artwork by local and famous artists from around the world! It's always incredible to see what artists have been cooking since the last Comic Con, and they always deliver one hell of a meal! Just this year, I came across one of my favorite artists from Etsy, called Brain Brain Studios. He paints and draws horror-related art from the most well-known to the most obscure movies. I was able to meet the artist and nab myself a few of his works for my wall at home. All the artists are extremely nice and full of energy, and it's a wonderful vibe all around!

4. THE FOOD

The options for food are always unique at Comic Con. From corndogs to jars of pickles, there's no shortage of variety at the food stations. One delicious delicacy I came across was the powdered donuts near the back of the convention. I remember my brother snagging a basket and the way his face lit up when he took that first bite was magical! You can also have your standard burgers, fries and pizza, but while you're attending, remember to be adventurous and branch out to something that catches your eye!

3. THE COSPLAY

One part of the experience is seeing what and who people are going to dress up as! Most of the time I was there, I was going around to several cosplayers and taking pictures with them. I met this one guy who was cosplaying as Ant Man and was carrying around a giant inflatable joint that said "Wait till the hive hears of this!" He was a very kind person and was fun to talk to about his cosplay ideas. The amount of detail and effort that goes into making the outfits is mind blowing, and it's a craft that deserves more respect.

I, too, have dabbled in cosplay. For example, one year I cosplayed as Ghostface from the "Scream" franchise while my best friend went as a Ghostbuster. Seeing all the fellow geeks getting to embrace the characters they love in a completely different light is amazing and sweet, as those cosplays reflect who we are and whom we aspire to be. I find it an inspiring and inventive way to express yourself!

2. THE COLLECTABLES

For someone who loves collecting action figures and certain knick-knacks from my favorite T.V. shows and movies, Comic Con is a gold mine, and I always find something of interest there. From comic books to mint condition rare collectables, it's here! Do you regret throwing away that old Transformers toy you had as a child? No worries! It's probably here waiting for you to come reclaim it. Even better, it might be in its original packaging! Now you can relive those memories while making new ones.

As someone who keeps a database of all my favorite actresses and actors in my brain, I love getting to meet with them in person. I can't guarantee they will all be pleasant, as I have had a rough meeting or two in the past, but most of them are usually in great spirits and love meeting and conversing with their fans!

1. THE CELEBRITIES

Just this year I got to meet the voice cast for "Star Wars: The Clone Wars" and one of my favorite comic book writers, Andy Lanning, who wrote the "Guardians of the Galaxy" comics back in the early 2010s. All of them were great to talk to, and I loved each second of the time that I got to spend with them.

Those are all the highlights of Comic Con and I hope that these reasons are enough to peak your interest. I want to thank *Central Michigan Life* for this amazing opportunity to go as a staff reporter and hope to do it again later this fall!

I'm proud to release my interview with Andy Lanning alongside this article! Check out the "Raving Geeks" Summer Special on Spotify under the Central Michigan Life channel. I hope you all drop in and listen, it's some of my best work yet!

The next Motor City Comic Con is taking place from Nov. 10 to Nov. 12. Hope to see you all there!

Carter Salley is a broadcast & cinematic arts major and host of the *Central Michigan Life* podcast "Raving Geeks."

RAVING GEEKS

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SPORTS: CMU Football looks to bounce back in 2023

By Ashley Birkeness and Kaia Zimmerman
Sports Editor and Assistant Sports Editor

For the first time in head coach Jim McElwain's tenure with Central Michigan football, the Chippewas completed the 2022 season with a losing record, going 4-8.

However, as the 2023 season approaches, the Chippewas are determined to bounce back.

"We need to do better than we did a year ago, and we're going to do that," head coach Jim McElwain said. "I'm really excited about our team. I'm excited about the guys that went through what we went through a year ago and are ready to not let that happen again."

McElwain said last year, he wasn't coaching to his full potential, but this year he is determined to lead this team to a better season.

"Everything that occurred a year ago it's all on me, it's nobody else," McElwain said. "And I just promised these guys, they're going to get the best Coach Mac that they've had in a long, long time, because we don't want that taste again."

Team chemistry

This year, players and McElwain are focusing on the team, rather than the individual.

One of the things McElwain stressed as they head into the season is the importance of relying on teammates. He said the offense, defense and special teams all need to work together to reach their goals.

"I think they've taken accountability with each other," McElwain said. "I think one of the things that happens to you, no matter what business you're in, is you got to rely on the person next to you doing their job, so you can do yours.

"And I think we found at times, maybe guys were trying to do too much. And in doing that, they might have messed up what somebody else was trying to do."

Redshirt sophomore quarterback Jase Bauer said the relationship the team has formed together during the offseason will help its performance heading into the 2023 season.

"I feel like there's just a lot of guys that have stepped up," Bauer said. "I just feel like it's more of a family atmosphere.

"I truly do love these guys. So, I think then (when) you have that feeling towards each other ... when you get on the field, you're willing to do a little bit more for the guy next to you."

Quarterback battle

Who would be this year's starting quarterback?

It's the question that was left unanswered after last season when the Chippewas had three different quarterbacks taking the position as the leading man on the field.

Two of the three that were part of the rotation and are retuning are Bauer and redshirt freshman Bert Emanuel Jr. The other quarterback, Daniel Richardson entered the transfer portal at the end of last season and is now at Florida Atlantic University.

Bauer played in six games and had one start last season. He rushed for 312 yards and four touchdowns on 53 carries. He also completed 59 percent of his passes for 435 yards and one touchdown.

In two of his appearances, Bauer rushed for 109 yards to become the first quarterback at CMU since 2018 to rush for over 100 yards in back-to-back games.

"I'm just kind of correcting some of the mistakes from last year ... working on myself and ... you know, trying to make the team better," Bauer said. "And I think it's been a great offseason. I really think we fixed a lot of mistakes from last year."

Emanuel played in four games last season as he led the Chippewas in rushing yards per carry with 7.4. He had seven rushing touchdowns, ranking him second on the team in rushing yards with 496. He also averaged 124 rushing yards per game, completed 4-8 passes for 54 yards and had three runs of 60 yards or more.

"Yeah, we're competing for the job, but at the end of the day, like that's my brother," Emanuel said. "They win the job, I'm (going to) support them, if I win the job, I hope they support me, so every day (I) just go out to compete and have fun."

Emanuel set a school record for single-game rushing yards for a quarterback, with 293 yards against Buffalo. That ranks as the fourth-highest, single-game total in school history.

The Chippewas could work in another arm under the snap in redshirt sophomore Tyler Pape, who is in his third season with the Chippewas.

Pape did not see any action last season and redshirted in 2021 where he played one game against Robert Morris and completed both if his pass attempts.

Marie Underwood | Staff Photographer
Players high five each other after scoring during a game against Buffalo, Wednesday, Nov. 9 at Kelly/Shorts Stadium.

Experienced defense

Although last season the defense didn't have the results in numbers that they wanted, this season the power houses return hoping to flip the script.

"You always look and go through the things you did well, and the things you need to improve on," McElwain said. "And for us, you know, getting out to the passer is gonna be huge.

"And yet, part of that is you got to make sure that you're holding them, making them hold an extra count, you know, in the secondary. So ... it all kind of comes down to everybody."

It's no question that the defensive line is led by its two All-Mid-American Conference

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picks in senior Jacques Bristol and graduate student Robi Stuart.

Bristol provides a depth of experience as he has logged 31 starts in 45 career games. Bristol has registered 100 career tackles, 20 tackles for loss and nine sacks since arriving in 2019 as a freshman.

Stuart enters his seventh season with the Chippewas and has accumulated two All-MAC team selections and five Academic All-MAC honors.

The defensive line will also look at more experienced lineman in Michael Heldman, Jason Williams, Jonah Pace and Quindario Lee.

In the backfield, the Chippewas have a qualified asset in senior linebacker Nick Apsey. Last season, Apsey found action in nine games on defense and special teams; he made 18 total tackles (12 solo) with three tackles for loss, a pass breakup, a forced fumble against Oklahoma State and a blocked kick against Penn State.

Alongside Apsey are junior linebackers Kyle Moretti and Justin Whiteside, a pairing that holds a force in the back field.

Moretti started all 12 games last season, totaling 94 tackles to lead the team. He also led in solo tackles with 60, and 7.5 resulting in a loss of 39 yards. Moretti's five tackles per game ranked seventh in the MAC and 27th in the nation.

"A lot of people on our defense are coming back with a lot of experience, so I think that'll help not only me, but the whole defense," Moretti said. "And the more experience you have, you know, the more you're gonna know what's gonna happen, and how you can prepare for that."

Whiteside, who started all 12 games, registered 67 total tackles, ranking him third on the team. He ranked fifth on the team with 34 solo tackles. Seven of his tackles resulted in a loss of 39 yards.

"Mainly, consistency is something I've been seeing that we've been working on," Whiteside said. "Also, we've gained a lot of experiences. We were very young last year. And a lot of guys (are) taking it serious, putting in the extra work."

The defense also has returners in redshirt sophomores Dakota Cochran and Lawai'a Brown, sophomore Jarvaris Sims and juniors Trey Jones and Donte Kent.

Tough competition

The Chippewas will face tough competition right out of the gate, starting off their season in East Lansing against Big 10 opponent Michigan State. CMU will face off against MSU for the first time since 2018.

The Spartans are coming off a 5-7 season and have lost some key starters as they head into 2023. However, MSU has dominated the series, defeating CMU in their last four meetings.

"There's definitely history here where we beat them and definitely some good matchups," Moretti said. "So, it's definitely gonna be cool. And it's just gonna be a great atmosphere.

"What we gotta do, we gotta just take each day at a time, focus on the details and focus on ourselves."

After the home opener against New Hampshire during week two, CMU will travel to South Bend, Indiana, to face off against Notre Dame. The Fighting Irish come into the season off of a 9-4 campaign in 2022 and are ranked No. 13 in the Associated Press National Football Rankings.

The Chippewas will finish off non-conference with a familiar opponent, South Alabama. The Jaguars are coming off a 10-3 season. In the team's last meeting, CMU fell to the Jaguars 38-24 in week two.

"Those are gonna be some big games," junior wide receiver Jalen McGaughy said. "And you know we played South Alabama last year, (and) we lost to them, so just coming out with a W is the main goal."

McElwain said starting out against the tough competition is a good opportunity for the team to grow and see where they are.

"I think it tests your program, it tests your kids," McElwain said. "You know, I think again, it's an opportunity to show our brain and on a national scale at three great places ... We should learn a lot about ourselves, but the most important thing to me is, let's make sure we compete and make sure that everybody knows who we are."

Here is CMU football's full 2023 schedule:
at Michigan State (Friday, Sept. 7 / 7 p.m.)
vs New Hampshire (Saturday, Sept. 9 / 1:30 p.m.)
at Notre Dame (Saturday, Sept. 16 / 2:30 p.m.)
at South Alabama (Saturday, Sept. 23 / TBA)
vs Eastern Michigan (Saturday, Sept. 30 / TBA)
at Buffalo (Saturday, Oct. 7 / TBA)
vs Akron (Saturday, Oct. 14 / 3:30 p.m.)
at Ball State (Saturday, Oct. 21 / 3;30 p.m.)
vs Northern Illinois (Tuesday, Oct. 31 / 7 p.m.)
at Western Michigan (Tuesday, Nov. 7 / 7 p.m.)
at Ohio (Wednesday, Nov. 15 / 7 p.m.)
vs Toledo (Friday, Nov. 24 / Noon)

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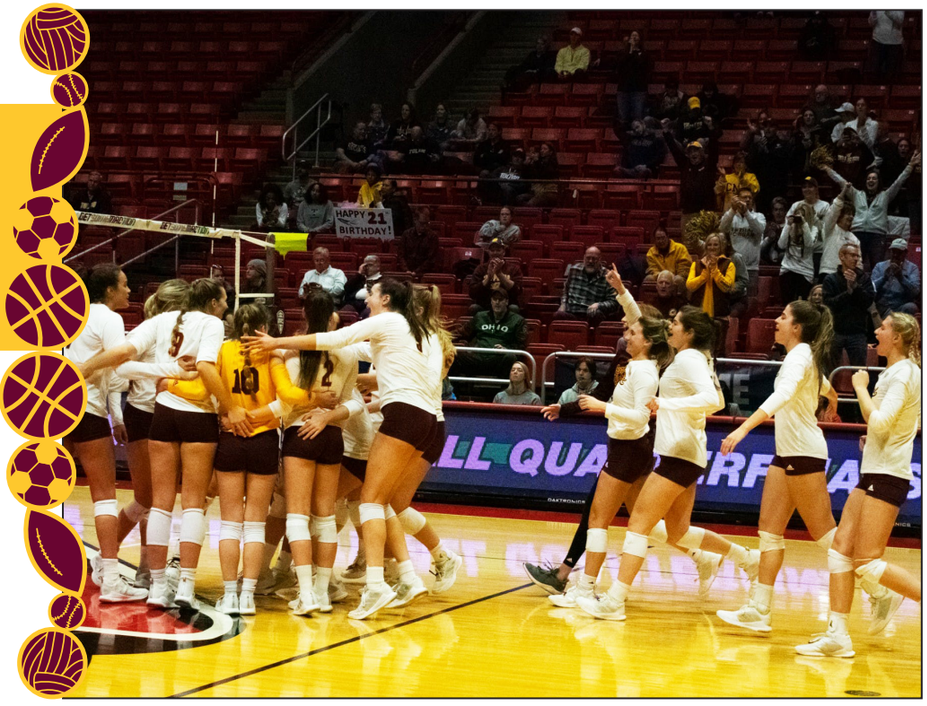
SPORTS:

CMU Volleyball welcomes new and old faces



Nate Pappas | File photo
The volleyball team celebrates after beating Toledo in the MAC tournament Sunday, Nov. 20, in Worthen Arena, Muncie, Ind.

By Megan Youngblood
Sports Reporter

Central Michigan volleyball swept Northern Michigan, 3-0, in an Aug. 19 exhibition match on Mackinac Island, to start off the 2023 season. This year the Chippewas are saying hello to a few new faces and welcoming back returning players.

"It's a really interesting squad that we have, because we don't have a single freshman on our roster right now," Head Coach Mike Gawlik said. "We brought in four transfers ... and with all our athletes all having gone through this at the collegiate level ... there's that understanding, I think, of what preseason is for everybody on our roster."

Among those new transfers are a graduate student and outside hitter Devon Bright, who previously hailed from Nicholls State.

"She's adjusting to a pretty new system for her, but she brings a real joy to playing the game that is important to have in the gym," Gawlik said.

In the middle of the court, CMU will have libero/defensive specialist Emma Dukate from West Virginia University; middle blocker/outside hitter Abby Olin, previously from Michigan State; defensive specialist/libero Aline Anderson and middle blocker Brooklyn Conner from Clemson.

While the Chippewas welcome in new faces, they also welcome back some returning players that are looking to step into new roles this season.

"On the right side, we've got (juniors) Krystina Kasson and Linnea Willer," Gawlik said. "They both really blossomed playing a year under Mallory Hernandez (former CMU volleyball player).

"Playing on the right side a year ago ... has really helped them kind of become even more aggressive and think of themselves like point scorers, like Mallory was for us ... That's been a really great growth moment for both of them."

After losing Anna Erickson, Maddie Whitfield and Hernandez last year due to graduation, the Chippewas have one returning captain.

"From a leadership perspective, we have ... Linnea Willer, who was a captain for us a year ago," Gawlik said. "Aly Gurtiza is a libero steeping into another leadership role, and I think we want to hear her more and more as a staple in our defensive side of the ball."

Last season Gurtiza broke the single season record for digs ending the season with 637.

Gawlik is also looking forward to players who were injured last year being able to come back healthy and contribute to the team.

"We got Austyn DeWesse who's been out for about a year and a half and is starting to work back into our practice," he said.

CMU ended its 2022 season getting swept in the NIVC tournament, and finishing the season with a 20-12 overall record and 12-6 in conference play. Winning is the goal this season, but Gawlik has additional ideas in mind for the team.

"The one that I pitched to the team, and I think it's our goal now (is) I want to be better on Mondays and Tuesdays," Gawlik said. "... a year ago we were capable of big things on Friday and Saturday. I said 'if we can really focus on Mondays and Tuesdays being a day that we're getting better as opposed to a day that we're just kind of plateauing we're gonna grow throughout the year.'"

The Chippewas exhibition match on Mackinaw Island has become a tradition that started a year ago and is very well-liked by the CMU squad.

"Last year we had a really great experience," Gawlik said. "The island was so great to us and everybody. We connected with some donors up there and we connected with some fans up there, and it's something we want to do every year now."

The Chippewas head to Montana for the SEMO invitational, Aug. 25 and 26, and will play on home hardwood Sept. 1 and 2 in the Chippewa Invitational.

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Parks ignite synapses and souls in Mount Pleasant

By Bryce Hollins
Special to CM Life

Ahh, late summer in Michigan: The long days of shimmering sunlight and bluebird skies; the gentle babbling of the Chippewa River as it makes its way downstream; the mountains of fresh-from-the-fields produce at the farmer's markets; the live concerts under the stars ... the mosquitos and traffic cones.

OK, no place is perfect, but for outdoors enthusiasts, Mount Pleasant is pretty close. With a dozen city-operated parks, three county parks and recreation spaces and two state-run camping and hiking spaces within a half-hour drive, there's no shortage of opportunities to get out and play at any time of year.

The following is a quick look at the city's major spaces and play places. For a list of Isabella County facilities, visit isabellacounty.org/departments/parks-recreation. To learn more about state parks throughout the Mitten, check out dnr.state.mi.us/ParksandTrails.

Also, just a quick reminder that permissible behavior in city parks is regulated by city code, and some facilities — say the skate space at Island Park — may have special rules. Before you go, check out the rules and regulations at mt-pleasant.org or the Parks and Recreation website.

1 Chipp-A-Waters Park

A 30-acre park on the west side of town, Chipp-A-Waters is located at 1403 W. High St. According to mt-pleasasnt.org: "Located on a State Conservation Area, (it) is a haven for wildlife and an escape for those wishing to enjoy the natural beauty of the Chippewa River." Chipp-A-Waters Park facilities include an open-air picnic shelter, picnic tables and grills, a playground, modern restrooms and nature trails.

2 Indian Pines Park

Located outside of city limits but still included on the city Parks and Recreation website, Indian Pines Park is an 80-acre destination inside Union Township. It can be found at the southwest corner of Valley and Summerton roads, and offers wooded wetlands and uplands for nature and bird lovers, access to the Chippewa River and undeveloped trails for wildlife watching or hiking. Hunting and motorized vehicles are prohibited in the park.

3 Island Park

Located at 331 Main St., Island Park is a 50-acre park with features such as a skate park, lighted softball fields, tennis and basketball courts, a spray park open only during the summer, a canoe landing, a fishing deck, modern restrooms and open-air shelters, to start.

4 Mill Pond Park

Mill Pond Park is a 90-acre park located in the center of the community at 607 S. Adams St. It has a canoe landing, fishing deck, nature trails, playground equipment, picnic tables, grills and a modern restroom. The Chippewa River runs through the entire park.

5 Hannah's Bark Park

Hannah's Bark Park is a 3.6-acre, pooch-friendly place where dogs can safely share in the fun. Community members and visitors are welcome, but registration and membership (either weekly or yearly) is required.

Illustration and design by Caroline Sharbaugh | Presentation Editor

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Union Square	:29	:59	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Target			UPON REQUEST
Music Bldg. - Lot#33	**:42**	**:12**	**EVERY 1/2 HOUR**
Washington/Ojibway	:44	:14	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Anspach/Pearce	:45	:15	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Ronan/Grawn	:47	:17	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Main St./Gaylord	:48	:18	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
MMC/DOAN CENTER			UPON REQUEST
Washington/Clayton	:05	:35	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Larzalere	:06	:36	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Wightman	:07	:37	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Park Library	:08	:38	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Music Bldg. - Lot#33	**:12**	**:42**	**EVERY 1/2 HOUR**

GOLD

SAC/McGuirk	:13	:43	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Stadium Mall			UPON REQUEST
TJ Maxx			UPON REQUEST
Walmart			UPON REQUEST
Copper Beech	:26	:56	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
The Reserve	:28	:58	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Jamestown	:30	:00	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Yorkshire Commons	:33	:03	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Music Bldg. - Lot#33	**:42**	**:12**	**EVERY 1/2 HOUR**

DEERFIELD

TOWERS @7/11	:15	:45	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Deming Edgewood	:16	:46	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Westpoint Village	:18	:48	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Deerfield Village	:20	:50	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Lexington Ridge	:25	:55	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Theunissen Stadium Lot#70	:27	:57	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Communter Lot #75	:29	:59	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
SAC/McGuirk	:30	:00	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
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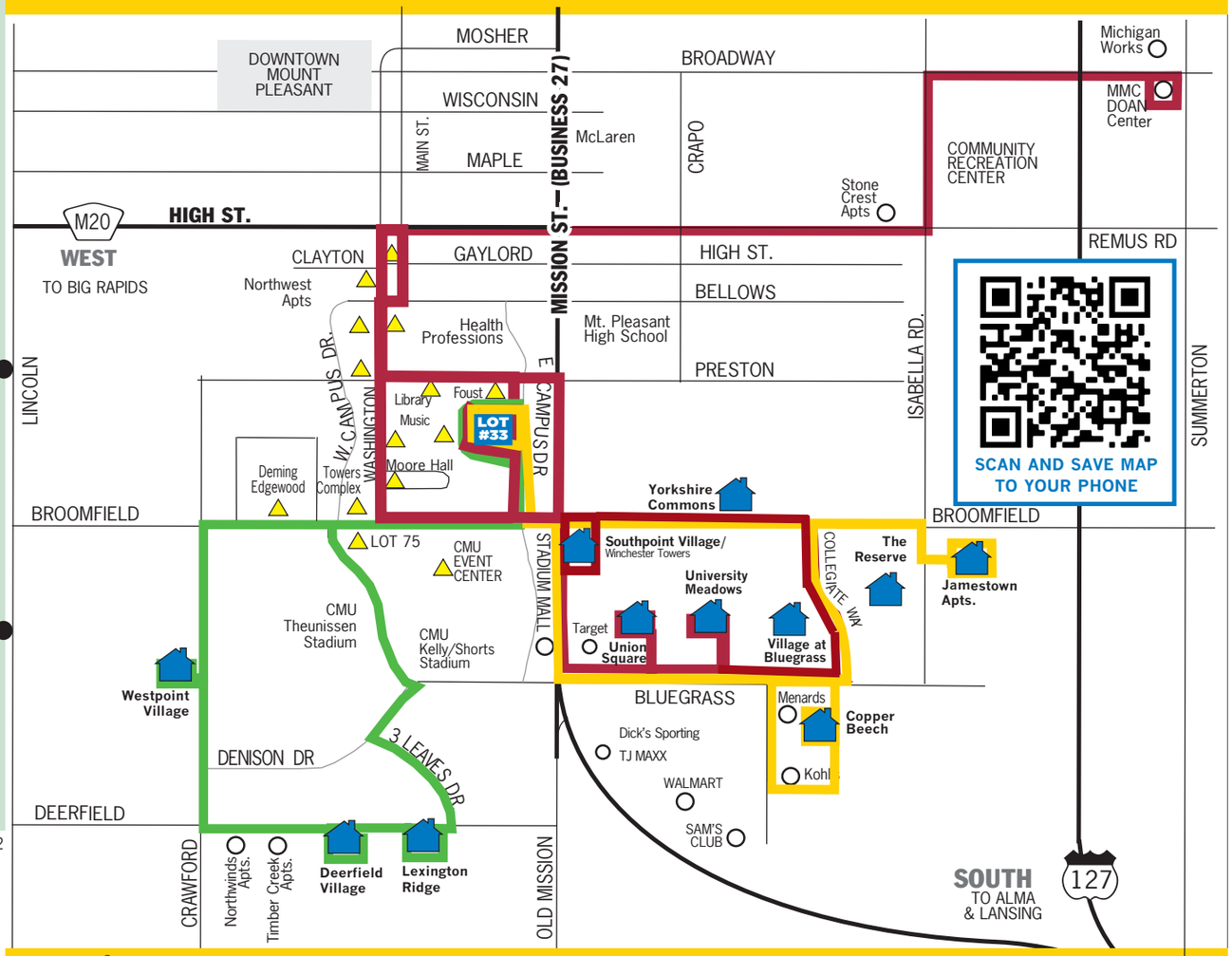

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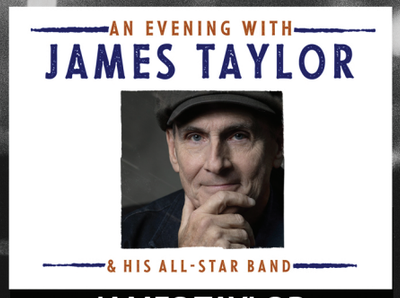

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